

Macon County Planning Board Minutes

July 15, 2010

Call to Order: Vice Chairman Larry Stenger called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

Members: Mike Gruberman, Mark West, Alan Marsh, Karl Gillespie, Jimmy Tate, Larry Stenger, Al Slagle, Evelyn Owens

Macon County Staff: Derek Roland, Jack Morgan, Matt Mason,

Media: Franklin Press, Macon County News

Approval of Minutes: Alan Marsh made motion to approve minutes, Mike Gruberman seconded this motion

Liaison Reports:

MCWC- Did not meet for month of June

Transportation Steering- (Jack Morgan) Morgan informed the board that the Transportation Steering Committee is scheduled to meet on July 29, 2010. Mark West followed up by saying this group was nearing the conclusion of their research.

Comprehensive Plan- (Derek Roland)- Reported that 4 of 5 committees had submitted final recommendations at this point. Roland informed the board when all committees had submitted recommendations, he would bring all of them before the board. Roland will bring a rough outline before the board at the August 19th planning board meeting.

Public Education Process:

The agenda was revised, moving a presentation by Derek Roland from new business to the public education section. The purpose of this presentation was to give the audience in attendance the history of how the discussion concerning slope development in Macon County began, what has been accomplished until now and where the board plans to head in the future. Roland re-assured the audience that the Macon County Planning Board had not yet began to write an ordinance and was still in the fact gathering stage. He reminded everyone that we must work together and find out what is best for the citizens of Macon County.

Matt Mason provided the audience in attendance with photos of well known, recognizable slopes within Macon County. The percentage slope of each photographed area was attached to each of the photos, in order to give citizens a better understanding of what slopes the proposed ordinance will regulate. Mason then went on to show the board drawings that illustrated the cut slopes and amounts of backfill present for homes placed on 25%, 33% and 40% slopes

New Business: Stenger requested that the Slope Development Committee bring evidence to support their recommendation of regulating development on Slopes greater than 30%.

Unfinished Business: The planning board continued the discussion on inviting students to sit on the board. These students would be non-voting members that would only participate in discussion. The students could be college students attending WCU, SCC, Haywood Community College or members of Franklin High-School. Each Planning Board member is to bring a recommendation to the next meeting. Stenger suggested that members ask Gary Shields (former FHS principal) or Connie Haire (SCC) for suggestions if they could not come up with one on their own.

Public Session:

Citizens from Pine Grove Community had the following questions concerning the recommendations from the Slope Development Committee:

1. If a lot has been approved for septic prior to an ordinance going into affect, but lies in a regulated area is it grandfathered? TBD
2. Is there any difference between 1 lot or 3 lots as far as proposed regulations are concerned? The proposed regulations would affect any land disturbance, regardless of the number of lots.
3. Are the slope maps available to the public? Can you consider the Maps on a parcel level basis? Do the maps consider rock outcroppings to be unstable?
4. How Many Counties currently have maps? Citizens can receive copies of the maps, although these maps are not affiliated with Macon County at this time. All questions regarding the maps were deferred to Rick Wooten of the NCGS whose contact information was distributed at this meeting. A common misconception is that these maps are inaccurate. This however, is not the case the maps are just not site specific.
5. How much Property would be considered useless? A very small amount
6. What effect would the maps have on the tax base of Macon County? Further research and consultation with counties who have these regulations in place is needed to answer this question.
7. Is the highest percentage of unstable area located in the USFS? Yes

8. Does cutting into a ridge create a downslope hazard? If done properly the chances are decreased.
9. Are ridge tops safe places to build? Yes, the top of the ridges in most cases, is the safest place to build.

Some citizens in attendance at this meeting felt that Macon County Strongly needed Slope Development Regulations. These citizens felt that regulations would not stop quality builders and will encourage everyone to build to higher standards.

Next Meeting Date: August 19, 2010 @ Burningtown Community (Oakdale Baptist Church)

Meeting Adjourned: Allan Marsh made motion to adjourn, Mike Gruberman seconded this motion. Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm by Vice Chairman Larry Stenger.